

White Paper

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White Paper: NEH Next Generation Humanities PhD Binghamton University

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1. GRANT ACTIVITIES

Major Activities

We undertook four major activities during this year:

- (1) We administered a ***Career Diversity survey to all Harpur College graduate students*** regarding their expectations and concerns about academic vs non-academic careers, as well as their experiences with/perceptions of faculty views regarding non-academic careers.
- (2) We began building a **database of PhD alumni** from our humanities departments, identifying their whereabouts and career paths.
- (3) We held a one-day ***Careers Conferences for Humanities PhD students and faculty***
- (4) We designed an ***Individual Development Plan (IDP) for humanities students***.

Steering Committee Activities

Our full steering committee [See **Appendix 1** for the list of *Major Participants*] met seven times:

September 9	Discussion of proposal and future plans, and formation of four subcommittees: (1) <i>Student Awareness</i> , (2) <i>Alumni Engagement</i> , (3) <i>Faculty Buy-in</i> , and (4) <i>Data Collection</i>
October 14	Initial reports from the four subcommittees
November 17	<i>Data Collection</i> report on results of PhD Career Diversity survey
December 12	<i>Student Awareness</i> report on survey of IDPs and next steps <i>Alumni Engagement</i> discussion of outreach activities for spring
February 14	<i>Student Awareness</i> planning and outreach for IDP pilot <i>Alumni Engagement</i> proposal for PhD Careers Conference in late spring Report from committee members on meetings with Next Gen partners at MLA, AHA, and NEH Project Directors Meeting

March 20	<i>Student Awareness</i> report on challenges in implementing the IDP pilot <i>Alumni Engagement</i> update and discussion of April careers conference
May 23	<i>Alumni Engagement</i> recap of conference and reflection on lessons learned

Additional Activities

September 1 & October 11	Consultations with Jodi Wesemann (American Chemical Society) on development and implementation process for IDPs
November 16	Webinar presentation by Florenz Plassmann for NEH Next Gen Consortium, “How to Navigate Your Self-Evaluation Plan”
April 2017	Kevin Boettcher wrote an essay describing the takeaway from our Careers conference in <i>Europe Now</i> , published by the <i>Council of European Studies</i> .

2. WHAT WORKED, WHAT DIDN'T

2.1. “Worked”: PhD Career Diversity Survey

Even though we had not planned a survey as part of our proposal, we realized early on that we had only a vague idea of our students’ most critical needs. What career paths were they considering? What resources would they actually use? And, perhaps most importantly, how did they perceive their department culture around post-degree employment?

In Fall 2016, we designed and distributed an anonymous online survey to all 881 PhD students enrolled in Harpur College. This included 314 students in our Humanities division (Art History, Comparative Literature, English, History, Philosophy, and the Translation Research & Instruction Program), as well as 307 students in the Sciences and 260 students in the Social Sciences. To make sure we had a suitably large response rate, we relied on department chairs, graduate directors, representatives from the Graduate Student Organization (GSO), and committee members to encourage graduate students to respond. We received a total of 166 responses (19.7%), 62 of which (20%) came from students in the Humanities, which we considered an acceptable response rate for a “cold” survey on a relatively new topic at our institution. In the survey itself, we asked a series of closed- and open-ended questions about their views of “non-academic” careers.¹ These questions were clustered around six broad categories: (1) their own

¹ We generally tried to avoid the term “non-academic careers,” which reinforces a superficial either/or view of post-doctoral careers. However, we went against our own beliefs and opted to use it in our survey, because it is

perceptions of academic and non-academic jobs; (2) their views of their department's culture around PhD career paths; (3) their knowledge and/or use of current campus resources; (4) their interest in possible new professional resources; (5) their general concerns around post-graduation employment; and (6) optional, anonymous demographic information (age, gender, race, nationality, projected degree year, etc.). In addition to providing a summary report for our Next Gen committee, we also provided department-specific reports to each Chair, which included histograms (as well as any written comments) for their department and the aggregate results for their division.

The survey turned out to be an essential building block for our committee. Not only did it push back on some of our implicit assumptions about the needs of our doctoral students but, just as critically, it helped get everyone in our interdisciplinary group on the same page—and all for a relatively low cost, as these things go. Our Data Collection subcommittee spent several weeks drafting the questions, but the technological implementation through Google Forms proved simple enough. It was easy to set up, distribute, and process results from the survey while still maintaining our students' anonymity. The biggest hurdle was getting students to actually respond. On top of the usual problems of online surveys—email links are likely to be ignored, buried, deleted, or delayed—we knew that graduate students might be concerned about somehow getting “outed” to faculty members in their department, or that they might simply wish to avoid thinking about an anxiety-laden subject like post-graduation employment. Our solution was to promote the survey through multiple channels and advocates—department chairs, graduate directors, student organizations, and university offices—and, in doing so, to stress the active role that our PhD students would have in this process, starting with their answers to these questions. In hindsight, we might have also held a large public event prior to sending out the survey—for instance, a “listening session” or “town hall” just for graduate students in the humanities—that would have made the impact and importance of the survey more visible.

2.2. “Worked”: Alumni Database

Along the same lines, we also realized that we needed to learn more about the career pathways that previous PhD students did take—in other words, who are our alumni, and what are they doing with their lives? Some departments maintain their own alumni lists, although the quality of that data varies widely from department to department and from year to year. Where records did exist, they are often outdated and they track only initial placements in faculty positions at other colleges and universities.

still the coin of the realm among most of our students and faculty. Otherwise, we tried to shape our campus conversation around terms like “career diversity,” “multiple paths,” and “career choice.”

We sought to address this problem in three main phases: aggregation, validation, and distribution. We began with a master list of all PhD graduates from our humanities departments since 2008, which the earliest year for which our Graduate School could provide detailed records. Departments then provided us with information about the relatively small number of alumni (about 10%) who kept in contact with individual faculty or department administrators. Using Google, LinkedIn, and social media sites for some considerable internet sleuthing, we were able to identify the current whereabouts and professional status of another 40% of our alumni. Our goal is to extend this database all the way back to the year 2000 in the fall. But the most important part of this work is how it will be used. We will make the information available to the departments so that they can advertise, on their respective webpages, the many career paths of their PhD alumni.

2.3. “Worked”: PhD Careers Conference

Our careers conference on Saturday, April 22, 2017 was perhaps our most significant accomplishment for the year. The day-long, intensive conference had about 70 attendees, including 12 alums, 12 faculty, 7 speakers, and 36 students, all of whom participated in every event throughout the day. **Appendices 2 and 3** contain a list of the attending alumni and the conference program (the conference website is [here](#)). We described our [take-away from the conference](#) in the campus section of *Europe Now*, published by the *Council of European Studies*.

We designed the conference program around five major parts:

1. An employer roundtable that featured two faculty members from nearby SLACs, an educational recruiter, a tech company VP, and two higher education program directors,
2. A total of six workshops (four for students, two for faculty) split into AM/PM sessions that offered concrete strategies and advice on graduate student professionalization,
3. A keynote address from a leading advocate for doctoral program reform,
4. An alumni circulator featuring a dozen Binghamton PhDs who had followed a wide range of professional paths,
5. Meals and coffee breaks throughout the day for attendees, presenters, alumni, faculty, and staff to interact with one another.

We were joined by Jenna Lay, the PI for Lehigh University’s Next Gen planning grant, who also brought four of her PhD students (one of whom wrote an illuminating [entry about the conference on her blog](#)), Stacy Hartman, the project director for the MLA Connected Academics program, Mearah Quinn-Brauner, the associate director of graduate student professional development at Northwestern University, and Sidonie Smith, the Director of the Institute for the Humanities at the University of Michigan and a former MLA President and Vice President.

The feedback on the conference was overwhelmingly positive. Students appreciated the hands-on workshops (on networking, answering job ads, crafting successful elevator pitches,

and honing professional skills), while the faculty were enthusiastic about their roundtable discussions (on supporting PhD students and reimagining the graduate seminar). Many students told us during and after the conference that they felt more energized, in control, and hopeful about their professional trajectory. Faculty brought the discussions back to their departments, and we expect to build upon those in the upcoming fall semester.

2.4. “Worked partially”: Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

One of our goals for this year was to develop and pilot a humanities-specific IDP. Having seen the success of IDPs at other institutions, particularly within the sciences, we originally saw this process as simple adaptation—that is, we thought we could find an established IDP at a peer university, tweak it to fit our programs, and then share it across departments. However, we learned quickly that this process would not be so easy. By a fortunate coincidence, Dr. Jodi Wesemann, the Assistant Director for Educational Research at the American Chemical Society (ACS) and project lead on their recently launched ChemIDP, was on Binghamton’s campus twice during the fall semester, and she agreed to meet with us to offer advice and expertise. As she told us, crafting an IDP for a specific student body is an iterative process, one that requires testing and feedback from all the stakeholders involved (graduate students, faculty, career counselors, etc.) and careful development.

We spent the remainder of the fall semester researching existing models of graduate student IDPs to determine best practices. After reading through dozens of samples from peer institutions and informally interviewing some student groups, we drafted a rough version of an IDP that included sample categories, an evaluation scale, and planning worksheets. In developing this tool, we sought to disarticulate the discrete activities that many IDPs blur together—namely, identifying skill sets, setting goals with an advisor, reviewing progress, and identifying possible careers—and break them into a clear steps. We had hoped to pilot our IDP in the spring semester with five or six faculty-student pairs, but our email requests for volunteers, which were sent out through faculty listservs, yielded only one volunteer pair. We plan to pick back up with the pilot study in the fall semester when, experience tells us, both faculty members and graduate students are far more likely to participate in projects like these. Likewise, rather than trying to find faculty-student pairs, we will also reach out directly to PhD students who attended the April conference.

2.5. Projects that we did not accomplish fully

We had proposed three additional activities that we did not accomplish fully:

- (1) The development of internships and non-academic assistantships on campus,
- (2) The pursuit of activities related to graduate assistantships and mentoring, and extend Harpur College’s LACE (Liberal Arts to Careers Externship) program to doctoral students,

(3) Discussions on how one might increase faculty acceptance of non-academic careers.

Each project needs a champion who stands behind it, makes sure that it receives enough attention, and shepherds it through to fruition. We had proposed a fairly large number of smaller projects, and finding enthusiastic champions for all of them was not easy. In some cases, the demands on time became too large to pursue a project successfully. But we also realized that it was impossible to pursue all projects simultaneously. Early in the planning process, we decided that it would be best to commit ourselves to working closer to home before we began formally pursuing external partnerships with local and regional employers. This was partly a practical consideration: for example, to create off-campus opportunities for PhD students through Harpur College's Liberal Arts to Careers Externships (LACE) program, we first needed to develop our PhD alumni database to know whom to contact. We also did not want to invest significant time, money, or energy in creating new on-campus assistantships before we knew whether our students would even want these positions to begin with. As the survey showed us, there was a big gap between students having professional opportunities at their disposal and them actually *using* them. We needed to stoke interest in "career diversity" or "alternate pathways" before building these programs, to show students that their department, Harpur College, and Binghamton University would support them if they chose to explore these opportunities.

Thanks to our careers conference in April, which generated a considerable amount of energy and enthusiasm around these topics, we consider the upcoming academic year to be the perfect time to tackle these projects. Binghamton University just hired new Deans of the Graduate School and of Harpur College of Arts and Sciences, and we expect that there will be energy and funds available to pursue the development of internships and non-academic assistantships on campus and for an extension of the LACE program.

3. WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

3.1. Our PhD students need (and appreciate) our help

One of the reasons we found our PhD Careers Survey so vital was because it showed us where our humanities students deviated not only from their peers across the country but from those within Binghamton University. In comparison with their fellow graduate students in the social sciences and STEM disciplines, our humanists-in-training expressed less interest—and less confidence—in pursuing careers beyond the tenure track. In general, they saw themselves as reasonably competitive candidates for both academic and non-academic jobs, and they expressed a sense of control over their professional trajectory, despite having an (understandably) abysmal view of the tenure-track job market. Based on conversations with

colleagues at other schools and on recent news coverage in *The Chronicle* and *Inside Higher Ed*, we had worried that humanities faculty and graduate students might resist or look down upon the idea of non-academic careers. But only a handful of respondents reported any overt opposition within their departments. Roughly half of the surveyed students said they would be “comfortable” discussing non-academic careers with, respectively, their adviser (48%) or their peers (50%), while relatively few students (under 5%) described hostility towards non-academic careers in their open-ended comments. That is a fairly encouraging sign. However, only a quarter reported having had a conversation about alternate career paths with *any* faculty member during their course of study (26%), and surprisingly few humanities graduate students could identify even *a single* alum from their doctoral program who currently held a full-time job beyond the tenure track (32%). Many lacked direct experience of their own: fewer than half of our students (42%) had held a full-time job for at least a year before entering their program.

A similar pattern emerged around their use of university-wide career preparation resources for graduate students. Most respondents were unaware of—or had simply never used—any of the tools on offer. This included professionalization classes (65%) and one-on-one appointments (79%) with our Career Center, workshops organized by the Graduate School (63%), and a slate of web tools, such as Versatile PhD (73%), sponsored by Harpur College. The exception was “Departmental Events & Workshops,” where a slim majority of students (60%) had attended at least one event. Conversely, the respondents seemed to gravitate towards new resources that would be more interactive and human-centered, particularly the creation of a PhD alumni network (71%) and the hiring of a career counselor specifically for graduate students (73%). This need for expert guidance, instructive examples, and expanded mentorship was reflected in many of the open-ended responses as well. Though these long-form answers differed greatly, the majority of our PhD students expressed interest in multiple career pathways but felt like they were stumbling through the dark.

Our graduate students want to explore more varied career paths, but they have no idea where to start, whom to consult, or how to look for jobs. When we organized our conference, we had some concerns about whether we would be able to attract a critical mass of students—and faculty—on a Saturday in April. But we need not have worried: when we reached out to graduate students, both at Binghamton and at other schools in the region, more than one hundred of them signed up for the conference in a little over a week. And our working theory about our graduate students—that they wanted guides and mentors, as the survey suggested—proved entirely true. For seven hours straight on a sunny Saturday, they asked panelists questions, participated in workshops, talked with alumni, and shared their own advice with one another. They learned a lot over the course of the day but, equally important, they learned that they wanted to learn more in the coming weeks, months, and years. In short, many of them are motivated, but lost. What they want is a guide—or, ideally, several guides — who can

point them in the right direction, which makes sense. Two of the key traits cultivated by doctoral programs in the humanities, intellectual independence and self-directed learning, shape graduate students into excellent autodidacts, but those skills can only be activated if they have clear examples to work towards, for example, from PhD alumni from their department, university, or discipline, as well as engaged, supportive mentors along the way (not just faculty but also staff, alumni, and fellow students).

That need for human engagement, however, is perhaps *the* major challenge when it comes to helping students imagine a wider variety of professional trajectories. A point frequently raised by members of our grant committee was that many faculty members—especially those who were deeply committed to supporting graduate students—are already stretched thin by service commitments and mentoring. They feel like they lack the time or know-how to help students explore careers outside academia because, after all, their expertise is *within* academia. The solution might be to look for other stakeholders who can help alleviate some of this pressure put on those faculty members. Alumni would be the natural choice, but that raises the issues that our departments tend to have fairly limited knowledge about their PhD alumni, something that takes significant time to build, which makes it all the more difficult to connect current graduate students to possible mentors outside the university (or beyond the tenure track). At the same time, Binghamton’s geographic location adds further constraints. Whereas PhD programs located in dense metropolitan areas like New York City, Boston, or Chicago have a wealth of industries and non-profit sectors near at hand, many of which can provide direct or indirect opportunities for students in those programs, our area has only a handful of opportunities in the immediate vicinity. Similarly, most of our graduates seek employment further afield: only three out of the twelve PhD alumni who returned to campus for our conference were within an hour’s drive.

3.2. Alumni are a great resource

That said, alumni engagement seems to be the clearest path forward. When we started investigating the career paths of our humanities alumni, we were amazed by what we found. Although a fair share of our humanities alumni has secured academic positions, including administrative positions as provosts and deans, a large number has found successful careers outside academia. Often the field in which an alum earned her or his PhD seems entirely unrelated to the career path—for example, a PhD in philosophy who became a senior software development engineer, another PhD in philosophy who is a manager at a major investment company, a PhD in comparative literature who is the president of an investigative company, and a PhD in history who works for the National Park Service. Perhaps more importantly, these alumni are interested in building these relationships. We had reached out to about twenty recent PhD alumni about participating in our “alumni circulator”—an event where students could have brief conversations with many different alumni who are now working in a range of

careers—and almost all said yes. In fact, they were brimming with ideas about ways they could contribute because, as many of them put it, they wished that there could have been the same open conversations when they had been students. Even though Binghamton is not a particularly easy destination to reach, they were willing to spend time traveling here, all so that they could help current students navigate the trails that they had needed to blaze for themselves. Several alumni told us that they were interested in serving as “externship supervisors” for our LACE program. Harpur’s LACE program is designed to provide an opportunity to gain insight into the realities of the workplace, and it matches students with a professional for a shadowing experience at the sponsor’s workplace. The LACE program is not targeted towards employment, and there is no expectation that sponsors provide or arrange employment or internships; rather, this opportunity gives students a chance to meet professionals, learn about their experiences and get constructive feedback that will help them prepare for the future. Hence even though we did not pursue any targeted activities during this year related to the extension of Harpur’s LACE program, we laid the groundwork by developing the alumni database and by finding alumni willing to serve as potential supervisors. Our original plan anticipated several trips to New York City and Washington, DC to identify such alumni, and we did not expect that we would be able to meet them on our own campus.

3.3. Initiatives must emerge from the faculty rather than from administration

At the same time, successful initiatives need broad faculty support, as well as the willingness of faculty to invest considerable time and energy. If faculty are not excited by the idea of change, then change simply will not happen. The overwhelming day-to-day demands on everybody’s time make it difficult to find the energy for activities that are ultimately perceived as add-ons.

Successful initiatives also need administrative buy-in to facilitate the implementation of new ideas. Few things are more demoralizing than encountering deaf ears only after identifying a solution that requires institutional support. On the other hand, enthusiastic faculty do not always recognize institutional constraints, and they might be unaware of related initiatives in other parts of the campus that might yield the necessary critical mass for moving forward.

There is no one-size-fits-all model for success, but all initiatives must be tailored to the particular institutional circumstances. Our grant was spearheaded from the Harpur College Dean’s office, which made it somewhat difficult to achieve the necessary broad departmental support for some of our projects. The faculty members on our steering committee were department chairs of our humanities departments, and department chairs face even stronger demands on their time than regular faculty. In retrospect, it might have been more promising to identify, for our steering committee, faculty with fewer administrative obligations. On the other hand, an advantage of our strong administrative involvement was the availability of talent, as well as time to pursue some of the groundwork, including the development of our

alumni database, the design and administration of our student survey, as well as the countless tasks that are necessary for organizing a successful conference.

4. NEXT STEPS

4.1. Introduce preparation for non-academic careers into the curriculum

For our careers conference, we had scheduled a faculty session to discuss their hopes and fears for graduate education as well as a faculty session on reimagining the graduate seminar. Each session had great faculty turnout with wonderful discussions. Faculty agreed that, currently, many of our humanities departments provide minimal training in teaching for our graduate students—even as many of our graduate students carry a high teaching load and are preparing for careers at teaching-oriented institutions. It also became clear that there is a need for finding ways to introduce some sort of preparation for non-academic careers into the graduate curricula.

The plan emerged to initiate conversations among the graduate directors in the humanities and humanities-related social science departments, with the goal of identifying common ground and common interests, and to generate sufficient critical mass for further initiatives. We will begin these conversations in the fall.

4.2. Roll out our humanities IDP

We will implement the IDP pilot study in the fall semester, reaching out directly to PhD students who attended the April conference. We plan to hold a brief seminar for students and faculty to introduce the idea of the IDP in general and our humanities version in particular, and recruit about 5 – 10 volunteers for the pilot. We will put particular focus on our instructions to faculty, trying to assuage their fears that the IDP will mean an increase in their workload, but rather an alternative way of using their advising time. Our goal is to solicit feedback by the end of the year, and possibly recruit additional volunteers in the spring. If the pilot is successful, we hope to make the IDP a standard fixture—on a strictly voluntary basis—in Harpur College.

4.3. Expand our survey to include more PhD students and alumni

We have formed a consortium with our SUNY peer institutions in Albany, Buffalo, and Stony Brook that has applied for a CGS grant on *Understanding PhD Career Pathways for Program Improvement*. Over the next 4 years, we plan to survey several cohorts of alumni with graduation dates as far back as 2001, as well as several cohorts of current PhD students. A part of the grant is funded by *Mellon Foundation* to survey students and alumni in the humanities, while the other part is funded by the *National Science Foundation* to survey students and alumni in STEM fields.

Appendix 1:

Table 1. Major Participants on the Planning Committee

Humanities Faculty:	
· Luiza F. Moreira	Professor of <i>Comparative Literature</i> and Department Chair <i>CO-PROJECT DIRECTOR</i>
· Joseph A. Keith	Associate Professor of <i>English</i> and Department Chair <i>CO-PROJECT DIRECTOR</i>
· Christopher Morgan-Knapp	Associate Professor of <i>Philosophy</i> and Department Chair
Administrators and faculty from the social sciences:	
· Florenz Plassmann	Professor of <i>Economics</i> and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research
· Gisela Brinker-Gabler	Professor of <i>Comparative Literature</i>
· Leslie C. Gates	Associate Professor of <i>Sociology</i>
· Elisa A. Camiscioli	Associate Professor of <i>History</i> and <i>Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies</i>
· Nathanael Andrade	Assistant Professor of <i>History</i>
Graduate Students:	
· Katrina England	Doctoral Candidate, Department of Philosophy
· Jessica Derleth	Doctoral Candidate, Department of History
· Chelsea Gibson	Doctoral Candidate, Department of History
· Allison Burgenis	Doctoral Candidate, Department of Political Science
Alumna:	
· Nicole Shea	PhD 2005, Comparative Literature; Director of the Council for European Studies, Columbia University
Career Development Professionals:	
· Holly Horn	Assistant Director of the Fleishman Center for Career and Professional Development, Binghamton University
· Dr. Courtney E. Ignarri	Administrative Coordinator of Graduate Affairs, Harpur College
· Dr. Kevin Boettcher	Career Development Specialist, Harpur College
· Danielle Britton	Assistant Director of Harpur Edge and the LACE program, Harpur College

Appendix 2:

Table 2. PhD alumni who attended our Careers Conference in April 2017

Art History		
Jeannine Keefer	2013	Visual Resources Librarian & Adjunct Assistant Professor, University of Richmond
Comparative Literature		
Nicole Shea	2005	Director of the Council for European Studies, Columbia University
English		
Daniel Shea	2003	Chair of the Division of Arts and Letters & Professor of English, Mount Saint Mary College
Carolyn Fagnoli	2009	Systems Librarian, Innovative Interfaces, Inc.
Melanie Cordova	2016	Communications Coordinator for College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University
History		
Douglas Ambrose	1991	Professor of History, Hamilton College
Andrea DeKoter	2012	Chief of Interpretation and Education, National Park Service
Mary Berkery	2013	Faculty Program Director for History, Excelsior College
Andrew Fagal	2013	Assistant Editor at The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Princeton University
Faherty Nielsen	2016	Executive Coordinator, Burchfield Penney Art Center
Philosophy		
Sean Cummings	2011	Manager, Binghamton University Acres Farm
Jessica Kyle	2013	Attorney, Beveridge & Diamond, P.C



DR. WHO?

A CAREERS CONFERENCE FOR
PROFESSIONAL HUMANISTS

SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 2017
BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

BINGHAMTON
UNIVERSITY

HARPUR COLLEGE OF
ARTS AND SCIENCES

WELCOME

We’re excited to have you join us for this landmark conference, and we hope that you’re excited to be here, too. Granted, we know that “excitement” may be a tall order. For most people in and around PhD programs in the humanities, the phrase “job market” evokes other feelings: Despair at the shrinking pool of tenure-track positions. Anxiety about the value of our expertise. Fear of an uncertain future.

Today’s conference – in its workshops and panels, in its lessons and conversations – tells a different story. Drawing on lived experiences and real people, it argues that a PhD in the humanities can take someone to any number of challenging, meaningful careers. We hope that, by the end of the day, everybody will leave feeling encouraged, empowered, and energized – not only about the job prospects for humanities PhDs but, perhaps more importantly, about the value and vitality of the work that people do to earn that degree.

CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST	9:00 AM
WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS.....	9:45 AM
EMPLOYER ROUNDTABLE.....	10:00 AM
MORNING WORKSHOPS	11:15 AM
LUNCH	12:30 PM
KEYNOTE ADDRESS	1:00 PM
AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS	2:00 PM
ALUMNI CAREER CIRCULATOR.....	3:30 PM
CLOSING REMARKS	4:30 PM
POST-CONFERENCE SOCIALIZING	5:00 PM

SCHEDULE

REGISTRATION
TILLMAN LOBBY

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST
MANDELA ROOM C

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM

WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS
MANDELA ROOM C

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM

Donald Nieman

Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
Binghamton University

EMPLOYER ROUNDTABLE
MANDELA ROOM C

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

What are employers looking for, and how might someone with a doctorate in the humanities fit with their program or organization? Hear from a panel of experts who have interviewed, hired, and/or worked with PhDs.

Douglas Ambrose

Ellis '38 Distinguished Teaching Professor of History
Hamilton College

Sarah Ames

Associate Director of Talent
Success Academy Charter Schools

Kathy Brunt

Director of Harpur Academic Advising & Assistant Dean
Binghamton University

Michelle Paul

Vice President of Product
Patron Technology

Daniel Shea

Chair of Division of Arts and Letters & Professor of English
Mount Saint Mary College

Nicole Shea

Director of the Council for European Studies
Columbia University

A. NETWORKING ISN'T A DIRTY WORD**UNIVERSITY UNION 111****Stacy Hartman**

Project Manager for Connected Academics

Modern Language Association

This workshop will help you re-imagine the evils of “networking” as something more benign: building connections between people. Learn how to expand your professional network through informational interviews and online tools.

B. GROWING YOUR SKILL SET WITHOUT LOSING YOUR MIND**UNIVERSITY UNION 108****Kevin Boettcher**

Research Development Specialist for Harpur College

Binghamton University

A crash course on the strategies (and psychology) for honing your professional skills or developing new ones. Attendees will consider their own skill set, identify what they want to improve, and set up tangible, achievable goals.

C. FACULTY DISCUSSION: HOW FACULTY CAN HELP**UNIVERSITY UNION 102****Jenna Lay**

Associate Professor of English & Director of Graduate Studies

Lehigh University

This conversation will offer faculty members an opportunity to explore their hopes and fears for graduate education. Attendees will discuss the individual and collaborative steps they might take to support students in a changing academic landscape.

BUFFET LUNCH
MANDELA ROOM C

12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

KEYNOTE ADDRESS
MANDELA ROOM C

1:00 PM - 1:45 PM

Sidonie Smith

Director of the Institute for the Humanities & Mary Croushore Professor
of the Humanities

University of Michigan

About the Speaker

Dr. Sidonie Smith has been one of the leading advocates for doctoral program reform in the 21st century. A former President (2010) and Vice President (2008-2009) of the Modern Language Association, she also chaired the MLA's Working Group on the Doctoral Dissertation (2010-2012) and was a key member of the MLA Task Force on Doctoral Education (2012-2014). She is the author of *Manifesto for the Humanities: Transforming Doctoral Education in Good Enough Times* (University of Michigan Press, 2015).

Dr. Smith was a faculty member in English, Comparative Literature, and Women's Studies at Binghamton University for more than a decade, during which time she was an Associate Dean (1983-1987) and then Interim/Acting Dean (1987-1990) in Harpur College and the Director of Graduate Studies for the English Department (1991-1993). She joined the English and Women's Studies Departments at the University of Michigan in 1996, where she was later named the Martha Guernsey Colby Collegiate Professor of English and Women's Studies (2001-2012) and then the Mary Fair Croushore Professor of the Humanities (2012-present). She has published and edited close to twenty books and more than seventy articles on autobiography, women's writing, and narrative, and she has held numerous fellowships at institutions in the U.S., Canada, Italy, and Australia.

A digital version of Dr. Smith's *Manifesto for the Humanities* can be found at tinyurl.com/HumanitiesManifesto.

D. FRAMING & REFRAMING YOUR STORY**UNIVERSITY UNION 111****Mearah Quinn-Brauner**

Associate Director of Graduate Professional Development
Northwestern University

The story you tell about yourself must change as your career goals evolve. Participants will learn how to succinctly and persuasively describe themselves to a range of audiences, including prospective employers.

E. SEARCH & EMPLOY: ANSWERING THE JOB AD**UNIVERSITY UNION 108****Stacy Hartman**

Project Manager for Connected Academics
Modern Language Association

Learn how to demystify and respond to non-tenure-track job ads. We'll read through job postings and go over strategies for shaping your materials to the (sometimes coded) language they use.

F. FACULTY DISCUSSION: REIMAGINING THE GRAD SEMINAR**UNIVERSITY UNION 102****Praseeda Gopinath**

Associate Professor of English & Director of Graduate Studies
Binghamton University

Dael Norwood

Assistant Professor of History
Binghamton University

Nancy Um

Associate Professor of Art History
Binghamton University

Faculty, alumni, and advanced PhD students are invited to join a panel of Binghamton faculty for a discussion about the future of the graduate seminar. What works? What needs to go?

ALUMNI CAREER CIRCULATOR

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM

MANDELA ROOM A/B

Meet Binghamton PhD alumni in a wide variety of engaging, exciting careers, and learn about what they do, how they got there, and more.

Douglas Ambrose (History, '91)

Ellis '38 Distinguished Teaching Professor of History
Hamilton College

Mary Berkery (History, '13)

Faculty Program Director for History
Excelsior College

Sean Cummings (Philosophy, '11)

Manager
Binghamton University Acres Farm

Andrea DeKoter (History, '12)

Chief of Interpretation and Education
National Parks Service

Andrew Fagal (History, '13)

Assistant Editor at The Papers of Thomas Jefferson
Princeton University

Carolyn Fagnoli (English, '09)

Systems Librarian
Innovative Interfaces, Inc.

Melanie Greaver Cordova (English, '16)

Communications Coordinator for College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Cornell University

Jeannine Keefer (Art History, '13)

Visual Resources Librarian & Adjunct Assistant Professor
University of Richmond

Jessica Kyle (Philosophy, '13)

Attorney
Beveridge & Diamond, P.C.

Faherty Nielsen (History, '16)

Executive Coordinator
Burchfield Penney Art Center

Daniel Shea (English, '03)

Chair of the Division of Arts and Letters & Professor of English
Mount Saint Mary College

Nicole Shea (Comparative Literature, '05)

Director of Council for European Studies
Columbia University

CLOSING REMARKS
MANDELA ROOM A/B

4:30 PM - 4:45 PM

POST-CONFERENCE SOCIALIZING
DOWNTOWN BINGHAMTON

5:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Join fellow conference-goers for food, drinks, and more conversation in downtown Binghamton. Stop by the Tillman Lobby after the conference wraps up to find out more.

SPEAKER & ALUMNI BIOS

Douglas Ambrose
Carolyn & David Ellis '38 Distinguished
Teaching Professor of History
Hamilton College

**EMPLOYER
ROUNDTABLE**

**ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR**

Douglas Ambrose has served on the history faculty at Hamilton College since 1990, the same year he earned his PhD from Binghamton University. He has been recognized for his excellence in both his teaching (Class of 1963 Award) and his mentorship (Sidney Wertimer Award), and in 2016, he was named the Ellis Distinguished Teaching Professor of History. Douglas studies and teaches courses on early America, the Old South, and American religious history, and his publications include *Henry Hughes and Proslavery Thought in the Old South* (1996) and a co-edited volume, *The Many Faces of Alexander Hamilton: The Life and Legacy of America's Most Elusive Founding Father* (2006). He has also edited and written the introduction to the late Eugene D. Genovese's *The Sweetness of Life: Southern Planters at Home* (forthcoming).

Sarah Ames
Associate Director of Talent
Success Academy Charter Schools

**EMPLOYER
ROUNDTABLE**

After graduating from Vassar College with a degree in History, Sarah Ames worked for the Society for Neuroscience in Washington, DC writing K-12 curriculum about the brain. She served as the Interim Center Director at an SAT prep company in California before pursuing her Master's in Educational Policy and Leadership at the University of Pennsylvania.

After graduate school, Sarah was part of the founding Operations Team at Excellence Girls Middle Academy in Brooklyn. She joined Success Academy Charter Schools in 2014 and now oversees a team responsible for hiring all Middle and High School Lead Teachers, as well as all School Leaders across the organization's 41 schools.

Mary Berkery

Faculty Program Director for History
Excelsior College

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

As Faculty Program Director, Mary Berkery oversees course development and design, curriculum, and faculty evaluation for the History program at Excelsior College, a non-profit online college in Albany, NY primarily geared toward non-traditional adult learners. She holds a BA in U.S. History from Union College, and an MA and PhD in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality History from Binghamton University (2013). Her dissertation focused on the 1977 International Women's Year conferences. Before coming to Excelsior, she worked as a Visiting Assistant Professor at Binghamton and was the Managing Editor of the *Journal of Women's History*.

Kevin Boettcher

Research Development Specialist for
Harpur College of Arts & Sciences
Binghamton University

WORKSHOP

Kevin Boettcher started a PhD program intending to be specialist in early modern literature, only to discover that he was a generalist at heart. These days, he advises faculty and doctoral students on how to craft persuasive, engaging narratives about their research in grant proposals, fellowship applications, and other peer-reviewed arenas. Before coming to Binghamton, Kevin held a variety of instructional and administrative positions at the University of Wisconsin and Rice University, where he worked with writers in nearly every academic discipline. In his past life, he wrote about the connection between eating and thinking in English accounts of the New World. He earned his PhD in English from the University of Wisconsin in 2016.

Kathy Brunt

Director of Harpur Academic Advising & Assistant
Dean for Academic Affairs for Harpur College
Binghamton University

EMPLOYER
ROUNDTABLE

Kathy Brunt has worked at Binghamton University since 2000 and currently serves a number of critical academic functions for Harpur College. As the Director of the College's academic advising office, she has been instrumental in expanding her office to match the demands of a rapidly growing (and constantly changing) undergraduate student body. Over the past two years, she has hired, trained, and mentored numerous PhDs and MAs for her staff, which now includes more than twenty full-time positions. In her role as Assistant Dean, Kathy handles a wide range of academic affairs for Harpur College, including curriculum, honesty, and academic standards. She earned an MA in Public Administration from Binghamton in 2007, and she previously worked at Princeton University.

Sean Cummings

Manager
Binghamton University Acres Farm

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

Sean Cummings runs all operations at BU Acres, a two-acre farm devoted to creating a deeper awareness of the connections between our food system and ecological and social environments. In addition to planning and managing the Acres growing season, he coordinates their internship and volunteer programs, which provide educational opportunities and fresh, natural produce to local communities. He has been actively involved in farming and foodways in the Binghamton area for almost a decade. After earning his PhD in Philosophy from Binghamton University in 2011, Sean continued working with the Volunteers Improving Neighborhood Environments (VINES) program and co-founded the Binghamton Urban Farm. He also teaches classes on sustainable agriculture and manages a draft-powered vegetable farm in Marathon, NY.

Andrea DeKoter

Chief of Interpretation and Education
National Park Service

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

Andrea DeKoter received her PhD in History from Binghamton University in 2012, but her work with the National Park Service began a decade earlier

when she got her start as a seasonal park guide at the Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, NY. Her career has since taken her to the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, and the Office of Communications at the National Capital Regional Office. From 2014-2015, she worked as a Legislative Affairs Researcher in the Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs in Washington, D.C. Currently, Andrea is Chief of Interpretation & Education for the Richmond National Battlefield Park and for the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site.

Andrew J.B. Fagal

Assistant Editor at The Papers of Thomas Jefferson
Princeton University

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

As an Assistant Editor, Andrew J.B. Fagal is part of a team that transcribes, annotates, indexes, and prepares for publication Thomas Jefferson's vast correspondence and business papers. A 2013 Ph.D. graduate from Binghamton's History department, his publications on early American politics have appeared in *Enterprise & Society*, *Reviews in American History*, *The New England Quarterly*, and *New York History*.

Carolyn Fagnoli

Systems Librarian
Innovative Interfaces, Inc.

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

After graduating from Binghamton University's English PhD program in 2009, Carolyn Fagnoli went on to get a Master's degree in Library and Information Science (MSLIS) from Syracuse University in 2015. A long-time lover of all things print, she has worked in numerous libraries throughout her career, including a rare books library, a law library, and several academic and public libraries. She now works in the library software industry, where she provides technical training and support to librarians all across the country. Before completing her MSLIS, Carolyn taught college-level courses in Victorian literature, world literature, composition, and creative writing, among other topics, and she holds an MFA in creative writing from Sarah Lawrence University.

Melanie Greaver Cordova

Communications Coordinator in the College
of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Cornell University

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

As Communications Coordinator, Melanie Greaver Cordova works on a wide range of projects for CALS. She develops, produces, and distributes stories about the College for audiences inside and outside the university, working in a variety of genres. She continues to do editing work for the Santa Fe Writers Project in her spare time, and you can find her on Twitter at @mjcwrites.

Stacy Hartman

Project Manager for Connected Academics
Modern Language Association

WORKSHOP

Stacy Hartman received her PhD in German Studies from Stanford University in 2015. Despite being a native Californian who'd never dreamed of living on the East Coast, she moved across the country one week after graduation to start work at the MLA. As project manager of Connected Academics, she helps doctoral students in language and literature fields imagine life after the PhD. In her free time, she watches hockey, waves protest signs, and hangs out with her cats.

Jeannine Keefer

Visual Resources Librarian, Art/Art History Librarian
& Adjunct Assistant Professor
University of Richmond

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

Prior to joining the University of Richmond, Jeannine Keefer completed her PhD in Art History at Binghamton University in 2013. As Visual Resources Librarian, she builds institutional and personal collections, consults on copyright issues, and provides image research to faculty and students. She is currently working on a growing number of digital humanities projects, including *Race and Racism at the University of Richmond* and the multi-institutional *Mapping the Medieval Woman*. Jeannine also teaches in the First Year Seminar program and the School for Professional & Continuing Studies, and she is the author of two recent book chapters: "The End of Urban Renewal" in *Building Drexel* (2016) and "Developing Digital Collections" in *The Art Librarian's Handbook, 2nd ed.* (forthcoming 2017).

Jessica Kyle

Attorney

Beveridge & Diamond, P.C.

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

Jessica Kyle graduated from Binghamton University's Social, Political, Ethical & Legal (SPEL) Philosophy PhD program in 2013. Her dissertation, "The Promise of Global Politics: Military Humanitarian Intervention and Care for the World," focused on international political theory. She went on to complete a JD in Environmental Law at the University of Maryland in 2015. During law school, Jessica externed at the State Department Office of UN Affairs and published articles on public international law and on environmental law. After completing a clerkship at the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, she joined the Baltimore office of Beveridge & Diamond, a law firm specializing in environmental law.

Jenna Lay

Associate Professor of English & Director
of Graduate Studies

Lehigh University

WORKSHOP

Jenna Lay has been a faculty member in Lehigh's English Department since 2010. She was her department's first job placement officer from 2013-2015 and currently serves on her university's Graduate and Research Committee, where she recently chaired a task force on future directions for graduate study. She is the project director for Lehigh's NEH Next Generation PhD Planning Grant, and she has written on placement issues and alternative career pathways for *The Chronicle of Higher Education* ("Job Market Advice – For Faculty," goo.gl/UnvP2E). Jenna will co-lead the Preseminar Workshop for Directors of Graduate Study at this year's ADE Summer Seminar East. She holds a PhD in English from Stanford University (2009) and her first book, *Beyond the Cloister: Catholic Englishwomen and Early Modern Literary Culture*, was published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 2016.

Faherty Nielsen

Executive Coordinator

Burchfield Penney Art Center

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

Faherty Nielsen earned her PhD in American History from Binghamton University in 2016, with a specialty in Race and Ethnicity. She currently works in the not-for-profit world in Buffalo, NY at a major art museum focusing on the regional art and culture of Western New York. In her current position, Faherty occupies a mix of behind-the-scenes and public-facing roles, all of which serve the Center's broad artistic mission. She works closely with the Executive Director, Development Director, and Board of Trustees to secure art and financial support, in addition to managing several community-centered educational projects, coordinating events, and developing new programs.

Michelle Paul

Vice President of Product

Patron Technology

EMPLOYER
ROUNDTABLE

Since joining Patron Technology in 2005, Michelle Paul has served in a variety of roles. Previously, she led development for PatronManager, a CRM system that combines box office ticketing, fundraising, and marketing. As VP of Product, she leads product and engineering teams and oversees all aspects of client support and education. A close observer of arts industry trends, Michelle is the co-author of *Breaking the Fifth Wall: Rethinking Arts Marketing for the 21st Century*, and she has presented over 20 seminars across the U.S. and in Spain. She currently serves on two committees for INTIX (the International Ticketing Association). She holds a BA in Classics from Wesleyan University, but since earning her Salesforce Advanced Administrator and App Builder certifications, she spends much more time translating apex code exceptions than ancient Greek.

Mearah Quinn-Brauner

Associate Director for Graduate and

Postdoctoral Professional Development

Northwestern University

WORKSHOP

In her position at Northwestern University's Graduate School, Mearah Quinn-Brauner serves as the central leader for all graduate- and postdoctoral-focused professional development offerings.

Among other responsibilities, she provides strategic direction, oversees program implementation and evaluation, and develops partnerships both within and outside of the University. Previously, she was a career adviser for PhD students from across the disciplines. Before transitioning into the field of graduate career and professional development, Mearah taught writing, English, and film in Philadelphia, where she earned her PhD in English from the University of Pennsylvania in 2011.

Daniel Shea

Chair of the Division of Arts and Letters
& Professor of English
Mount Saint Mary College

EMPLOYER
ROUNDTABLE

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

Daniel Shea is a proud 2003 graduate of Binghamton University’s English PhD program and has since been at Mount Saint Mary College in the lovely Hudson Valley region, where he teaches courses on freshman writing and literature, British Literature, Creative Writing, and Irish modernism. He has published on James Joyce, Walter Benjamin, and Mary Lavin, and he is currently working on a study of the cultural implications of Ireland’s reforestation project. Currently, he is chair of the Division of Arts and Letters, which includes English, Theatre, Art, Music, Languages, Journalism, Public Relations, and Media Studies.

Nicole Shea

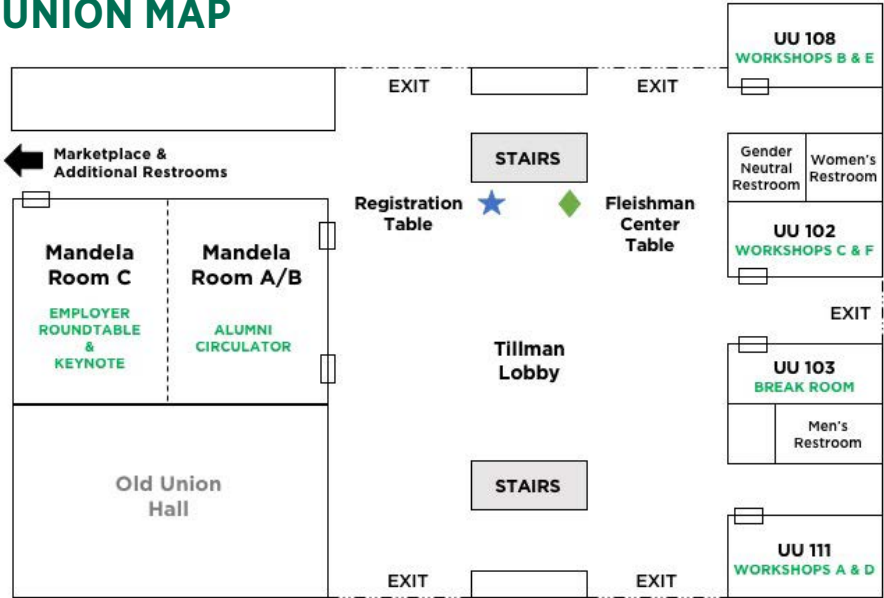
Director of the Council for European Studies
Columbia University

EMPLOYER
ROUNDTABLE

ALUMNI
CIRCULATOR

As Director, Nicole Shea leads a wide range of projects for the CES, including the annual International Conference of Europeanists and ten different research networks covering social movements, memory studies, and other topics. She is the Executive Editor of *EuropeNow*, a multidisciplinary, open-access journal that seeks to bridge traditional academic publication and blogs. It’s articles and commentary on timely issues reach more than 50,000 readers every month. Nicole earned her PhD in Comparative Literature at Binghamton University in 2005. Before joining CES, she served as the Executive Director of the Eisenhower Leadership Center at West Point where she shaped the Center’s innovative interdisciplinary programs and its successful global operation. Prior to that, she spearheaded cultural affairs programs and integrative curricular development as director, art curator, and faculty for Mount Saint Mary College and SUNY Orange.

UNION MAP



*Coffee, snacks, and other refreshments will be available throughout the day in UU 103.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This conference is made possible by a Next Generation PhD Planning Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. We would also like to thank the Council for Graduate Studies, the MLA Connected Academics Program, the Fleishman Center, the Research Foundation, Harpur College, Binghamton University, and, last but not least, the many alumni, speakers, graduate students, faculty, and staff who have helped make this event possible.

